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An

Inaugural Dissertation,

on

Leucorrhœa;

by

William W. Oliver,

of

Virginia.

red

yellowish brownish

yellowish

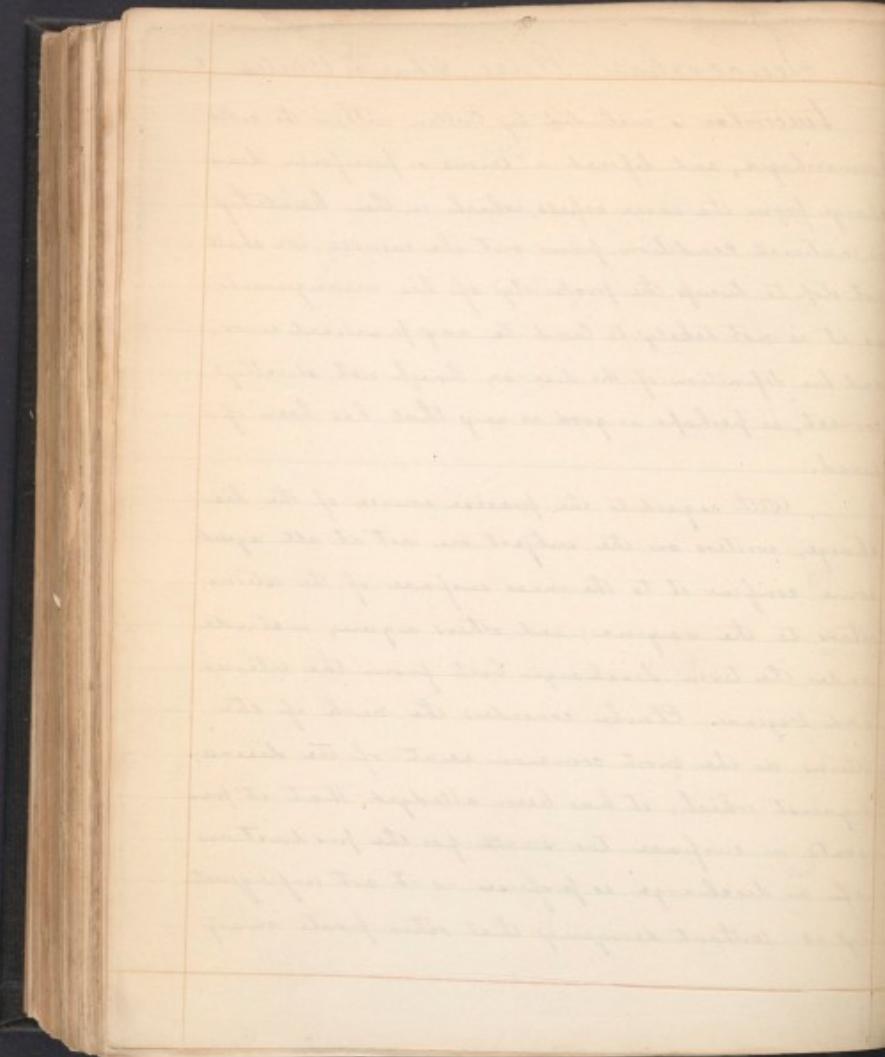
yellowish

yellowish

Leucorrhœa, Fluor Albus or Whites.

Leucorrhœa is included by Cullen within the order Haemorrhagia, and defined a "terous or puriform discharge from the same vessels, which in their healthy or natural condition pour out the menses." We shall not stop to discuss the propriety of his arrangement, as it is not likely to lead to any practical error; and his definition of the disease, though not strictly correct, is perhaps as good as any that has been offered.

With regard to the precise source of the discharge, writers on the subject are not at all agreed: some confine it to the inner surface of the uterus; others to the vagina; and others again, include under the term, discharges both from the uterus and vagina. Clarke considers the neck of the uterus as the most common seat of the disease, against which, it has been alledged, that it presents a surface too small for the production of a discharge so profuse as it not unfrequently is. Without denying that other parts may



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be occasionally involved, the best writers seem to agree that the vagina is the most frequent source of the discharge.

The matter discharged in leucorrhœa differs both in colour and consistence at different periods of the complaint. At first, it is thin and glairy very much resembling the white of an egg, and may be considered as natural mucus. In this early stage, the constitution is seldom affected. At a more advanced period, it is of a milky colour, and is generally greatly increased in quantity. It may also be of a purulent nature - and all these discharges are occasionally mixed with a little blood; particularly in the advanced stage, when the discharge is purulent, and is supposed to indicate the existence of organic injury.

Leucorrhœa may be produced by causes acting on the general system, or it may result from local irritation; and has hence been divided into

the country down the river was flat and
open, with a few scattered trees and
scrubby bushes. The water was shallow
and clear, reflecting the sky above.
The banks were covered with tall grasses
and low-lying plants. The air was
humid and warm, with a distinct
odor of the tropics. The sun was high in
the sky, casting long shadows across
the landscape. The water was
calm, reflecting the surrounding
trees and bushes. The sky was
clear and blue, with a few wispy clouds.

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Idiopathic and symptomatic leucorrhœa. The first is to be considered as depending on the state of the system at large; the second as entirely local, and arising from some partial affection of the genital parts, the consequence of injury or any other irritating cause. When the discharge is very abundant, or when its quality is highly acrimonious, leucorrhœa is said to be symptomatic of a diseased condition of the uterus, or indicates a disposition thereto.

Among the causes of idiopathic leucorrhœa, the most common are abortion, menorrhagia, excessive indulgence of venery, frequent or difficult labours, &c all of which are supposed to act by producing a laxity or loss of tone in the vessels, by which there is an increased quantity of blood determined to the parts.

As causes of symptomatic leucorrhœa, writers are, we believe unanimous in enumerating scirrhous, Cancer, polypus, prolapsus uteri &c

which is now
of late time probably in residence at the
post office or some site, upon the ridge of
the steep hillside where many species of
wood are known as the "Drap" taking their
name from the red wood quaking after the
gale is passing. It is also a good name for
the place it is almost impossible
to find a white birch for a mile
around. I suppose it is because the
soil is very poor for cultivation so few
leaves can live on it. It is hard wood
and probably good for furniture if the
trees are cut down and dried.
This is a country full of them
and several species of wood are
seen in summer. A red one, a yellow
one, a white, a yellow, a red, and a white quak-

The causes we have mentioned are such as are calculated to debilitate the general system, but more particularly to impair the uterus and its appendages. By some writers it is contended that this disorder never arises from debility; but is always a primary affection of the uterus, or is occasioned by a change in the structure, position or actions of the neighbouring parts. That this is not invariably the case, is satisfactorily proved by the fact, that delicate women removing from a cold to a warm climate are extremely liable to the disease without the uterus having previously sustained any kind of injury. In moist countries and climates, also, where it is to be expected that the body would be impaired and the general system debilitated, we are informed that the discharge of mucus from the vagina is so abundant as to be exceedingly inconvenient to the women.

also sitting with feet in stones

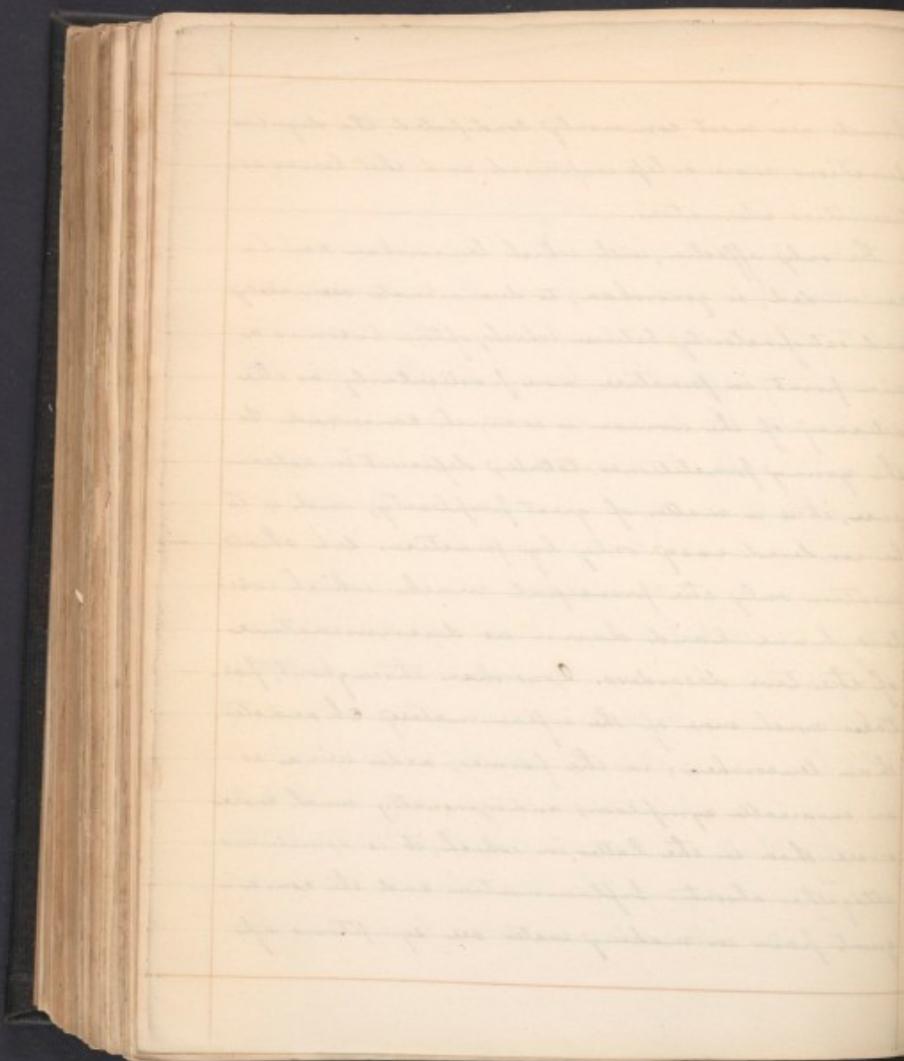
The leucorrhœa, so prevalent in many parts of Holland, has been ascribed (by Leake) to the dampness of the climate.

Leucorrhœa generally shows itself by the irregular discharge from the vagina, of a white, pellucid fluid, which is either diminished or entirely suppressed during the flow of the menses. As the disease advances, the discharge becomes variously discoloured, and sometimes, so acrid as to irritate and inflame the parts, with which it comes in contact; and hence the ardor viva sometimes complained of. If the woman be of a full habit, there is not unfrequently a considerable augmentation of vascular action accompanied by vertigo and head-aches. On the other hand, in a state of debility, it is attended by dyspepsia, palpitation and most of the other complaints which are connected with debility. In the former, we recognize the "leucorrhœa collida," and in the latter, "leucorrhœa frigida" of Horvins. The

and the drug passes on to the next membrane
of epithelium to a layer of connective tissue.
The mucous membranes are very important organs of
respiration since it is here that most of the
gas exchange takes place. They are covered
with a layer of mucus which protects them
from damage and infection. The mucus is
secreted by goblet cells which are scattered
amongst the other cells of the epithelium.
It is composed mainly of water but also
contains proteins and carbohydrates. It is
secreted by the goblet cells and is then
absorbed by the epithelial cells. This
process is called diffusion and it is
the main way that oxygen and carbon
dioxide pass through the skin.

bowels are most commonly constipated, the digestive functions more or less impaired and the lower excretaries adenous.

The only affection, with which leucorrhœa can be confounded, is gonorrhœa; to discriminate accurately and satisfactorily between which, often becomes a nice point in practice, more particularly as the delicacy of the woman is so much concerned. To the young practitioners, totally deficient in experience, it is a matter of great perplexity, and is to be rendered easy only by practice. We shall mention only the principal marks which writers have laid down as discriminative of the two disorders. Gonorrhœa throughout, partakes much more of the inflammatory character than leucorrhœa; in the former, ardor urinae is an invariable symptom, and generally much more severe than in the latter, in which, it is sometimes altogether absent. Inflammation and the consequent pain in making water are symptoms of



the early stage of gonorrhœa; whereas, in leucorrhœa they are the consequence either of a neglect of cleanliness or of the great acridity of the discharge. In gonorrhœa, the tumidity of the labia and neighbouring parts is greater - the inguinal glands are more apt to be enlarged, and the inclination to venery greater than in leucorrhœa: in the former, the discharge is constant and generally pretty uniform in quantity; in the latter, it is very irregular in quantity, sometimes being scarcely observable, at others so profuse as to occasion an alarming debility, and is either wholly suppressed or moderated at every period on the appearance of the menses. Should an inquiry into the circumstances we have mentioned fail of establishing in our minds the precise nature of the woman's ailment, we are directed to enquire into her character and connections; a direction which should be attended to in every case in which they are not above suspicion.

There are perhaps no diseases to which females are liable, better calculated to excite distress and anxiety on their part, or from which, dangerous consequences are more apt to result than those of the genital organs. So extensive are their sympathies, and so powerful the influence they exert over parts, the undisturbed exercise of whose functions is essential to health, the constitution seldom escapes unharmed. From motives of delicacy, however, women not unfrequently conceal their diseases, and are willing to reveal them to the practitioner only after delay has aggravated all the symptoms or perhaps placed them entirely beyond the reach of his skill.

Taken in the commencement, and attacked vigorously, no disease is more manageable than the one under consideration; and perhaps few, in which delay enhances in a greater degree the difficulty of cure.

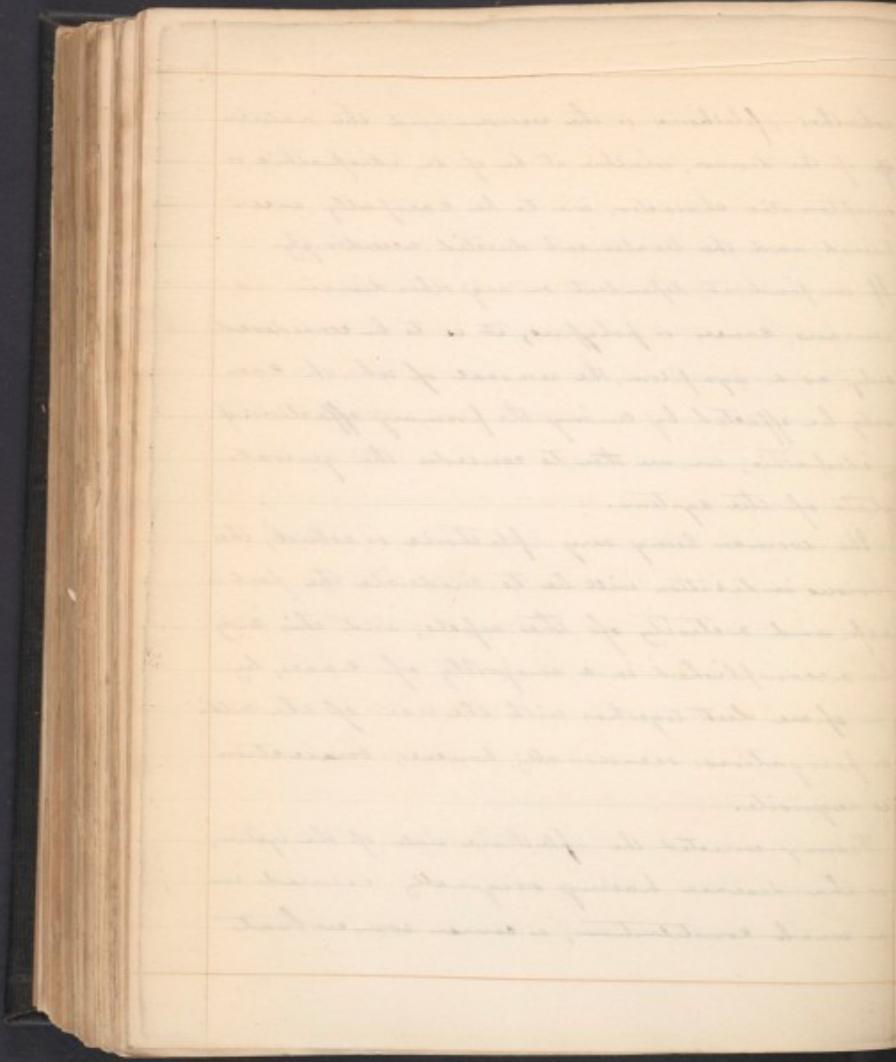
In the first place, the condition of the system-

whether plethora or the reverse - and the nature
of the disease, whether it be of an idiopathic or
symptomatic character, are to be carefully ascer-
tained, and the treatment directed accordingly.

If we find it dependent on any other disease, as
scirrhous, cancer or polypus, it is to be considered
only as a symptom, the removal of which can
only be effected by curing the primary affection: if
idiopathic, we are then to consider the general
state of the system.

The woman being very plethoric or robust, the
obvious indication will be to moderate the feel-
ing and activity of the vessels; and this may
be accomplished in a majority of cases, by
a spare diet together with the use of the mild
ex purgations: occasionally, however, venesection
is requisite.

Having corrected the plethoric state of the system,
or the disease having originally occurred in
a weak constitution, a course somewhat



different, it is to be pursued. As meeting the indications under such circumstances, a great variety of tonics, and various astringent injections have been recommended by most writers on the subject. Among the former, Cinchona bark, Columbus, Rhubarb and the Chalybeates seem to hold the highest rank. The astringents which have proved most efficacious are solutions of the saccharum salueni, the sulphates of zinc and alumine, and a decoction of oak bark.

In a case of chronic leucorrhœa which during the last summer occurred in the Alms-houses, Doctor Mitchell ordered tincture of cantharides, so freely diluted as to be scarcely sensible to the taste, to be thrown up the vagina three or four times a day; which had the effect of checking the discharge almost immediately, and the woman was accordingly discharged in a very few days. We have not met with an oppo-

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tunity of repeating this practice, though from
the very decided operation of the article in the
case alluded to, it undoubtedly merits attention.

In the management of this affection, emetics
have acquired a considerable reputation. They are
supposed to prove beneficial, not only by cleansing
the stomach and preparing the way for other
remedies; but by making their own peculiar
impression on the system, they effectually
correct the vitiated secretion in which the
disease specially consists. Emetics exercise a
considerable influence over most of the secre-
tions - and from the well established sympathy
between the Chylomicra viscera generally, espe-
cially the stomach, and the genital parts,
this employment in leucorrhœa, to say the last,
ought not to be considered empirical.

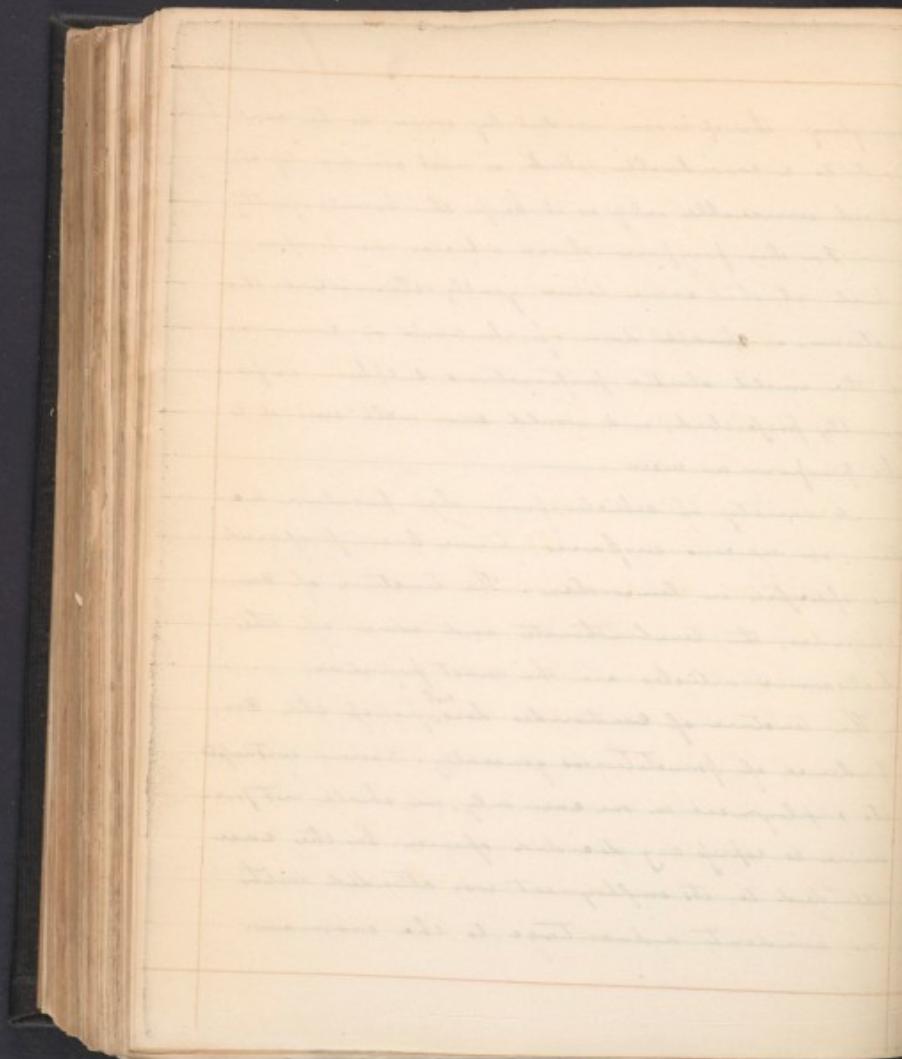
Spurce, it is thought, has something of a
specific action, and is the article most com-
monly employed.

and the first time I have seen it
in the field. It is a small tree with
a very dense crown of small leaves.
The bark is smooth and greyish
brown. The flowers are white and
the fruit is a small oval shape about
the size of a pea. The wood is
very hard and heavy. The leaves
are opposite and entire. The flowers
are produced in clusters at the
ends of the branches. The fruit
is round and smooth. The wood
is used for making furniture and
the bark is used for tanning leather.

Purgings, though recommended by some to be carried to a considerable extent, is most commonly considered serviceable only as it keeps the bowels gently open. For this purpose, those articles are proper, which at the same time gently stimulate the actions - as small doses of rhubarb or some one of the mild astringent preparations. Sulphur is frequently prescribed, and would seem well suited to the purpose in view.

A variety of articles, from their peculiar action on mucous surfaces, have been proposed as specifics in leucorrhœa. The tincture of cantharides, the terebinthinate and some of the balsamic articles are the most popular.

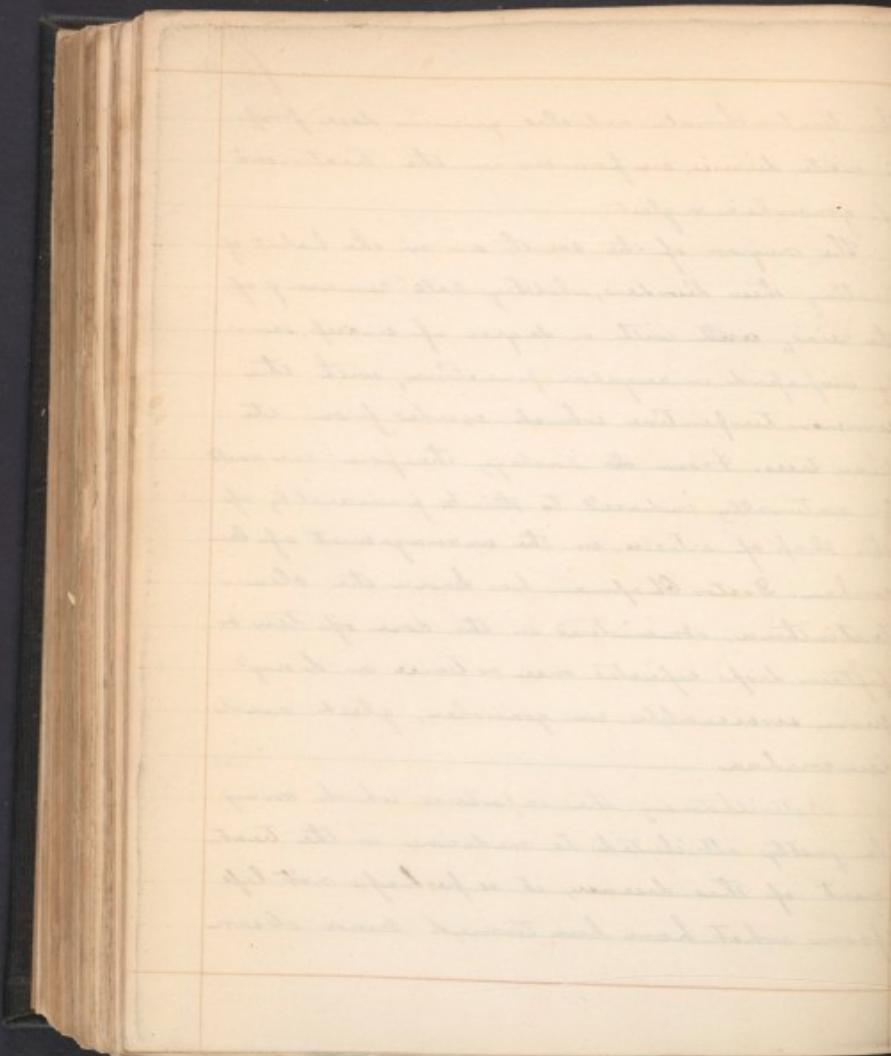
The tincture of cantharides does, ^{not} however, inspire the confidence of practitioners generally. Having witnessed its employment in one case only, we shall not presume to express any decided opinion. In the case alluded to, its employment was attended with no evident advantage to the woman.



The terbinthinate articles, given in dose, proper to excite diuresis, are famous in the treatment of gonorrhœa & gleet.

The negroes of the south are in the habit of treating these disorders, which they call "running of the reins," and with a degree of success, scarcely surpassed in regular practice, with the common turpentine which exudes from the pine trees. From the analogy therefore, we would be naturally induced to think favorably of this class of articles, in the management of leucorrhœa. Doctor Chapman has known the oleum terbinthinae, administered in the dose of ten or fifteen drops repeated once or twice a day, prove serviceable in gonorrhœa, gleet and leucorrhœa.

Notwithstanding the importance which may be justly attributed to medicines in the treatment of this disease, it is perhaps not far from what have been termed minor obser-



vances, that good results are to be expected. Cleaning, throughout, is of the first importance; hence, the parts should be washed frequently during the day with tepid water; and the patient's bed and body linen changed daily. By these means, we shall not only add greatly to the present comfort of our patient, but will frequently prevent a most painful and troublesome excitation of that part of the vulva ~~in~~ⁱⁿ which the discharge may accumulate. Although circumstances may render a variation of diet necessary, yet it should always be light and of easy digestion.

The woman should take regular and moderate exercise: carried to the extent of fatigue, it hardly ever fails to prove mischievous, by increasing the discharge, and adding to her weakness. The daily use of the cold bath, as a general tonic, will often prove beneficial; but it is contraindicated in those cases where there is considerable languor,

and am this day set
out to go to the
city of New York
and return to the
country for the purpose
of taking a tour of
the city of New York
and the country around it.
I will be back to my
home in time to see the
autumn leaves. I will
be gone about three weeks
and return to my home in
time to see the autumn leaves.
I will be back to my
home in time to see the
autumn leaves.

and should not be repeated when its use is followed by a sense of chilliness.

He should carefully avoid exposure of every description, but particularly to night air. The use of warm and relaxing articles of diet, immoderate venery and an excessive indulgence of sleep, especially on a feather bed, are to be considered as predisposing to the disease, and should consequently be avoided.

very good

